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PROJECT PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT REPORT

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA

IMPROVING RELEVANCE AND QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION
(IDA-37810)

EDUCATION SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
(IDA-H1960 AND IDA 44230)

August 22, 2012

IEG Public Sector Evaluation
Independent Evaluation Group

Currency Equivalents (annual averages)

Currency Unit = Sri Lanka Rupee (LKR)

2003	US$1.00	LKR 96.5	**2008**	US$1.00	LKR 108.3
2004	US$1.00	LKR 101.1	**2009**	US$1.00	LKR 114.9
2005	US$1.00	LKR 100.5	**2010**	US$1.00	LKR 113.1
2006	US$1.00	LKR 103.9	**2011**	US$1.00	LKR 110.6
2007	US$1.00	LKR 110.6			

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
DFID	Department for International Development
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation Agency
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDA	International Development Association
ISR	Implementation Status Report
JBIC	Japanese Bank for International Cooperation
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
ICR	Implementation Completion and Results Report
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
Tracking Survey	
PPAR	Project Performance Assessment Report
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund

Fiscal Year

Government: January 1 – December 31

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Contents

This report was prepared by Maurice Boissiere, who assessed the project in February 2012. The report was peer reviewed by Tara Beteille and panel reviewed by Denise Vaillancourt. Maria Margarita Sanchez provided administrative support.

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Principal Ratings

IMPROVING RELEVANCE AND QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION PROJECT

	*ICR**	*ICR Review**	*PPAR*
Outcome	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory
Risk to Development Outcome	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Bank Performance	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory
Borrower Performance	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

EDUCATION SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

	*ICR**	*ICR Review**	*PPAR*
Outcome	Satisfactory	n.a.	Satisfactory
Risk to Development Outcome	Moderate	n.a.	Negligible to Low
Bank Performance	Satisfactory	n.a.	Satisfactory
Borrower Performance	Satisfactory	n.a.	Satisfactory

* The Implementation Completion and Results Report (ICR) is a self-evaluation by the responsible Bank department. The ICR Review is an intermediate IEG product that seeks to independently verify the findings of the ICR.

Key Staff Responsible

IMPROVING RELEVANCE AND QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION PROJECT

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EDUCATION SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

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IEG Mission: Improving World Bank Group development results through excellence in evaluation.

About this Report

The Independent Evaluation Group assesses the programs and activities of the World Bank for two purposes: first, to ensure the integrity of the Bank's self-evaluation process and to verify that the Bank's work is producing the expected results, and second, to help develop improved directions, policies, and procedures through the dissemination of lessons drawn from experience. As part of this work, IEG annually assesses 20-25 percent of the Bank's lending operations through field work. In selecting operations for assessment, preference is given to those that are innovative, large, or complex; those that are relevant to upcoming studies or country evaluations; those for which Executive Directors or Bank management have requested assessments; and those that are likely to generate important lessons.

To prepare a Project Performance Assessment Report (PPAR), IEG staff examine project files and other documents, visit the borrowing country to discuss the operation with the government, and other in-country stakeholders, and interview Bank staff and other donor agency staff both at headquarters and in local offices as appropriate.

Each PPAR is subject to internal IEG peer review, Panel review, and management approval. Once cleared internally, the PPAR is commented on by the responsible Bank department. The PPAR is also sent to the borrower for review. IEG incorporates both Bank and borrower comments as appropriate, and the borrowers' comments are attached to the document that is sent to the Bank's Board of Executive Directors. After an assessment report has been sent to the Board, it is disclosed to the public.

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Outcome: The extent to which the operation's major relevant objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, efficiently. The rating has three dimensions: relevance, efficacy, and efficiency. *Relevance* includes relevance of objectives and relevance of design. Relevance of objectives is the extent to which the project's objectives are consistent with the country's current development priorities and with current Bank country and sectoral assistance strategies and corporate goals (expressed in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, Country Assistance Strategies, Sector Strategy Papers, Operational Policies). Relevance of design is the extent to which the project's design is consistent with the stated objectives. *Efficacy* is the extent to which the project's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance. *Efficiency* is the extent to which the project achieved, or is expected to achieve, a return higher than the opportunity cost of capital and benefits at least cost compared to alternatives. The efficiency dimension generally is not applied to adjustment operations. *Possible ratings for Outcome:* Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Moderately Satisfactory, Moderately Unsatisfactory, Unsatisfactory, Highly Unsatisfactory.

Risk to Development Outcome: The risk, at the time of evaluation, that development outcomes (or expected outcomes) will not be maintained (or realized). *Possible ratings for Risk to Development Outcome:* High, Significant, Moderate, Negligible to Low, Not Evaluable.

Bank Performance: The extent to which services provided by the Bank ensured quality at entry of the operation and supported effective implementation through appropriate supervision (including ensuring adequate transition arrangements for regular operation of supported activities after loan/credit closing, toward the achievement of development outcomes. The rating has two dimensions: quality at entry and quality of supervision. *Possible ratings for Bank Performance:* Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Moderately Satisfactory, Moderately Unsatisfactory, Unsatisfactory, Highly Unsatisfactory.

Borrower Performance: The extent to which the borrower (including the government and implementing agency or agencies) ensured quality of preparation and implementation, and complied with covenants and agreements, toward the achievement of development outcomes. The rating has two dimensions: government performance and implementing agency(ies) performance. *Possible ratings for Borrower Performance:* Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Moderately Satisfactory, Moderately Unsatisfactory, Unsatisfactory, Highly Unsatisfactory.

Preface

This is a Project Performance Assessment Report (PPAR) covering two education projects in Sri Lanka. The first operation, the Improving the Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education Project, was financed through IDA Credit No. 37810 in the amount of US$40.3 million equivalent and a planned Government contribution of US$10.7 million equivalent. The credit was approved on June 10, 2003, became effective on August 25, 2003 and was closed on June 30, 2010, 6 months after the original closing date.

The second operation, the Education Sector Development Project was financed through IDA Credit #444230 in the amount of US$60 million equivalent, approved on December 15, 2005. An additional $US10 million was approved on June 5, 2008. The credit closed on June 30, 2011 on schedule.

This PPAR was prepared by Maurice Boissiere, IEG consultant. The findings are largely based on a two-week mission to Sri Lanka from February 13 to February 24, 2012. The mission met with education authorities, both national and provincial, as well as private business people. The mission visited schools and administrative offices in Central and Northern Provinces as well as a number of universities. A list of persons met is given in Annex B. The mission also examined: (a) World Bank project files, (b) project related reporting and evaluation, and (c) education studies with data by government and other Development Partners, as well as the relevant research literature.

The IEG team gratefully acknowledges the logistical assistance and support of the staff in the Colombo Office of the World Bank for expediting the work of the mission. Many other ministry, provincial, and university officials were generous with their time, especially in arranging visits to project sites.

Following standard IEG procedures, a copy of the draft PPAR was sent to the relevant government officials and agencies for their review and feedback, and no comments were received.

Summary

The objective of this report is to assess the development effectiveness of two education projects in Sri Lanka – the *Improving the Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education Project* and the *Education Sector Development Project.* The Undergraduate Education Project was approved on June 10, 2003 for total cost of US$51.0 million equivalent financed by an International Development Association (IDA) credit of US$40.3 million equivalent with the rest financed by the Government. The Education Sector Development Project was approved on December 15, 2005 for a total cost of US$60.0 million financed by IDA credit of US$60.0 million, which was increased in 2008 by US$10.0 million for total of US$70.0 million.

Sri Lanka is a lower-middle income country with per capita income of around US$2,240 in 2010. Its population of 20.8 million grows modestly at about 0.7 percent per year. The population is diverse ethnically (Sinhalese, Tamil, and other minority groups) and religiously (Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, and Christians). Despite the serious military conflict with Tamil separatist groups since 1983, the most intense fighting was confined to the north and east, and the overall economy grew about 5 percent on average throughout the 1990s and 2000s. The conflict finally came to a close in May 2009. The country now faces the challenge of restoring civil harmony by undertaking reconciliation and reconstruction in the war torn areas and finding a viable political resolution. The education sector was thought to have an important role in the quest for social cohesion.

The structure of the education sector consists of primary school (grades 1 to 5), junior secondary (grades 6 to 9), and senior secondary (grades 9 to 13). Primary and junior secondary are considered to be basic education, which is compulsory. Overall, about four million students are enrolled in basic and secondary education in almost 10,000 schools. Universal primary education, for grades 1 -5, was achieved with net enrollment rate reaching 96 percent in 2005; the net enrollment rate for grades 1-9 was less (81 percent). Tertiary education, comprising university degree programs and some post-secondary training programs that confer diploma-level credentials, enrolls about 390,000 students.

Improving Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education Project

The project development objectives were to "support the government's tertiary education reform program by enhancing institutional capacities conducive to greater relevance and quality in undergraduate education." The issues to be addressed involved the unemployment problem of university graduates, the need to update the curriculum and make it more relevant to labor market demand, and the need to modernize both curriculum and administration in higher education

The relevance of the objectives is substantial given that the Government development strategy and the Bank's Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) (2008) stressed equitable development with conflict resolution, economic growth, and improved public service delivery. The relevance of project design was substantial in that the activities and instruments chosen, such as competitive grants and block grants to universities, provided incentives and resources to change and renew their academic programs. There was a

reallocation of US$9 million to the Tsunami Emergency Relief Project in 2006 when the Bank and Government agreed to close the Tharuna Aruna II private sector internship. The latter program was no longer relevant because the new Government in 2004 decided to provide public sector employment to unemployed graduates.

The Institutional Block Grant program was successfully implemented, which built up teaching infrastructure. The Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council was established and operated successfully. The National Higher Education Management Information System was developed. Private sector employers report that they value English fluency and Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills along with academic achievement. The Institutional Block Grants and Quality Enhancement Fund increased training in these areas. The average time to first job after graduation fell substantially, from 14 months (June 2004) to 4.5 months (September 2009). The Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council conducted assessments and training that benefited over 32,000 students and 3,200 staff members. From 2005 to 2008 test scores in English rose from 49 to 56 percent and in Information Communication Technology from 59 to 69 percent.

Based upon substantial relevance, substantial efficacy for all three objectives, but modest efficiency, the project outcome rating is moderately satisfactory. The risk to development outcome is moderate given that new measures, such as quality assurance and competitive funding, have gained acceptance. The performance of the Bank is rated moderately satisfactory at entry. There were shortcomings in the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) design. However, strong efforts during supervision to revise the M&E design resulted in significant improvement. The quality of Bank supervision is rated satisfactory. The borrower's performance is rated satisfactory. The Government remained committed to all of the objectives. This was shown by the budgetary commitments to the project and the follow-on project Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century, which essentially supports the same objectives. The Ministry of Higher Education and its Policy Planning and Development Unit were well staffed with committed and hard-working professionals. Thus, Government and implementing agency performance were both satisfactory.

Education Sector Development Project

The project development objectives were to: "(a) promote equitable access to basic education (grade 1-9) and secondary education (grade 10-13); (b) improve the quality of education; (c) enhance the economic efficiency and equity of resource allocation and (d) strengthen education governance and service delivery." The project was designed as a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) and the objectives were derived from broad themes identified as important during the preceding preparation and sector work. Thus, the project was designed to be implemented across the whole sector and in all the provinces. The SWAp modality included the broad policy framework and the pooling of Bank funds following the country budget system.

The relevance of the objectives is substantial and they are aligned with the overall objectives of the most recent CAS (2008) and with the Government strategy as outlined

above. The relevance of project design as a SWAp was substantial given the widespread nature of the objectives and their range of implementation.

Equitable access was substantially improved. In primary grades 1-5, Sri Lanka has had gender parity for some years. The national network of schools is complete, with only maintenance and refurbishing tasks, depending upon location. This achievement is being maintained through the demand side incentives of the project, such as providing free uniforms and meals and snacks. The completion rate through grade 9 has increased from 78 percent (2005) to 91 percent (2011).

Quality and learning outcomes also improved. The National Assessment of Learning shows that achievement scores for grade 4 in first language improved from 69 percent (2005) to 83 percent (2011). The achievement scores for grade 4 in mathematics improved from 67 percent (2005) to 82 percent (2011). The percentage of schools with teaching plans increased over the project period from none to 100 percent, the percentage of schools staffed with qualified staff and supported by teacher development increased from 80 percent to 95 percent, and the percentage of textbooks delivered to schools on time increased from none to 100 percent.

Before the project there was very little information on how resources were allocated; budgets were developed on an ad hoc basis. The Public Expenditure and Quality Education Tracking Survey was developed, the first round in 2006-07 producing a report to track both quality and resources. Resources for higher order learning processes, such as critical thinking and problem solving, were increased in the recurrent budget from 0.5 percent at project start to 3.3 percent at completion. The capital budget did not prioritize higher order learning processes at project start, but by completion 43 percent was allocated compared to a target of 40 percent.

School-based management—the Program for School Improvement—was introduced. This involved a model of balanced control in which some functions of school management were devolved to the school level while others were retained at provincial and national levels. The basic features involved communities through a School Development Committee, school-level planning, a sustained program of training for teachers and the community, and high level support within the province and national Ministry of Education. An impact evaluation of the pilot schemes showed that program schools attained better student learning compared to non-program schools.

The project outcome is rated satisfactory. The risk to development is negligible to low. The thematic objectives are now firmly rooted with strong ownership across all levels and the understanding of the SWAp approach is widespread. The performance of the Bank is rated satisfactory at entry. The design and preparation were based upon strong analytical work. The sector issues were well understood and there was high level involvement of Government officials that resulted in the necessary ownership for a SWAp. The performance of the Bank during supervision was also satisfactory. The Bank team provided frequent and detailed implementation support by visiting the provinces and zones. In addition to assisting in procurement and fiduciary issues, support for the analytical work continued throughout the project.

The performance of the Borrower was satisfactory. Throughout preparation the Central Government agencies showed their strong support and helped to develop the capacities of the Provincial level authorities to implement the project. The performance of the implementing agencies was satisfactory. This included the national Ministry of Education and the Provincial Education Authorities who coordinated their responsibilities for implementation and monitoring project activities.

Lessons

Based upon the experience of the Undergraduate Education Project, a few priority lessons can be drawn.

- **In designing higher education sector reform programs, it is helpful to be selective and pick the top priority, feasible, issues first, avoiding trying to do too much in one project.** In Sri Lanka, the selection of quality and relevance, and the related systemic capacity building, were the entry points into a reform program that all stakeholders could agree upon. This provided the initial momentum to get the sector reform started, with the realization that it would take more than one project cycle.
- **Institutional and competitive grants provide a good incentive to overcome, for the most part, the accumulated inertia of past academic bureaucracy, at least in new programs.** In Sri Lanka they also improved academic programs that did not directly receive a grant, through a demonstration effect.
- **In a reform where there is some initial resistance, it is important to have the support of a few respected champions within the sector.** In Sri Lankan higher education, the quality assurance process succeeded in the end, after some initial suspicion and misunderstanding on the part of some professors, due to the effective leadership of a few energetic and respected professors.

The Education Sector Development Project also presents some useful lessons.

- **A sector-wide approach can increase ownership of sector goals and the work program by working through the country budgetary system and implementation arrangements.** In the case of Sri Lanka, both provincial and national level officials became more involved in sector planning, programming and resource allocation as well as review and M&E of sector performance.
- **The SWAp can serve as a catalyst to leverage both the financial and technical support provided by the Bank and other donors.** In Sri Lanka, it initiated a broader and more regular policy dialogue with the Government and leveraged Bank influence on sector resource allocation beyond the resources it directly provided.
- **Decentralization and school-based management, accompanied by capacity building and support, have the potential to improve education processes and outcomes.** In the situation of devolution to the provinces in Sri Lanka, the school-based management program enhanced ownership of the project objectives.

Caroline Heider
Director-General
Evaluation

1. Background and Context

1.1 This report assesses two completed education projects that represent the results of nearly a decade of World Bank support for primary, secondary, and tertiary education in Sri Lanka. The *Improving the Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education Project* (henceforth referred to as Undergraduate Education Project) was approved on June 10, 2003 for an International Development Association (IDA) credit of US$40.3 million equivalent, with a government contribution estimated at US$10.7 million equivalent. The *Education Sector Development Project* was approved on December 15, 2005 and was financed by an IDA credit for US$60.0 million with an additional US$10.0 million approved in 2008 for a total of US$70.0 million.

1.2 These two projects were selected for assessment because they address issues that not only reflect strategic priorities in Sri Lanka, but in many other countries over this period, namely: increasing access, quality, and learning outcomes in primary, secondary, and tertiary education; the extent to which the poor, disadvantaged, and girls have been reached; and the extent to which schooling inputs have translated into greater learning and acquisition of skills. In addition to these sector objectives, there are potentially important lessons to be learned from these projects concerning: how effective the basic and secondary education system prepare students for tertiary education; the relationship between post-primary educational investments and labor force relevance and outcomes; and the extent of project coordination to build effective linkages between primary, secondary and post-secondary education. This evaluation could also help to throw some light on the effectiveness of undertaking reforms in an environment made all the more difficult by ethnic conflict and natural disaster (the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami).

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXT IN SRI LANKA

1.3 Sri Lanka is a lower-middle income country with per capita income of around US$2,240 in 2010. Its population of 20.8 million was growing modestly at about 0.7 percent. The fight against poverty has shown progress with the poverty rate falling from around 23 percent of the population in 2005 to 15 percent (2006/7) and about 9 percent (2009/10). Despite suffering from a separatist conflict since 1983, the economy grew about 5percent on average throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Much of the fighting was concentrated in the Northern and Eastern provinces, with serious bombings occurring in Colombo and other major urban centers. Nonetheless, the Western and Central provinces managed to experience economic growth above the national average, which could have been even higher if not for the conflict and the costs that it imposed. The conflict finally came to a close in May 2009 after many years of suffering by civilians and the loss of much economic progress. The country now faces the challenge of restoring civil harmony by undertaking reconciliation and reconstruction in the war torn areas and finding a viable political resolution. The education sector is seen to have an important role in this quest for social cohesion.[1]

[1] This is a complex issue, which goes well beyond the scope of this report and reaches back into Sri Lankan history (see Silva 2005). After independence from Great Britain in 1948, a number of policies about official languages and education (Sinahala, Tamil, and English) led to a sequence of events, culminating in the ethnic

EDUCATION IN SRI LANKA

1.4 The education sector in Sri Lanka had been recognized as one of the better performing ones among developing countries with its achievements being above those countries in its income group. Overall, about four million students are enrolled in basic and secondary education in almost 10,000 schools. Given that population growth has slowed, Sri Lanka does not face the demographic pressure on school enrollment it did during the early days after independence. Universal Primary Education, for grades 1 -5, was achieved with net enrollment rate reaching 96 percent in 2005. However, access to junior secondary (grades 6-9) and senior secondary (grades 10-13) is much lower than primary, especially in the poorer or conflict affected regions. For example, in 2001, the Bank sector report (2005) showed the enrollment rate for provinces at grades 1-5 varied little—from 92 percent (Northeast) to 98 percent (Western province). For grades 6-9, it varied from 73 percent (Northeastern) to 87 percent (Western province). At the end of grade 11 there is the examination for General Certificate of Education O-Level and at the end of grade 13 there is the examination for General Certificate of Education A-Level. The latter has very high stakes, as it determines entry into one of the public universities, for which only about 20 percent qualify. Net enrollment in basic education (grades 1-9) was 81 percent with a completion rate to grade 9 being only 78 percent.

1.5 With respect to senior secondary level, there has been steady progress in enrollment over the past 2 decades, with gender parity being more or less maintained over the years, though there is still a slightly higher net enrollment rate for girls (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Net Enrollment Rates for Senior Secondary School (percent)

Year	***1991***	***2007***
Male	34	65
Female	41	69

Source: World Bank 2011d

1.6 Tertiary education comprises university degree programs, public and private, and some post-secondary training programs that confer diploma level credentials. The Ministry of Higher Education has overall responsibility for tertiary institutions and for policy. The public universities receive their funding through the University Grants Commission, which is a quasi-autonomous commission reporting directly to the Minister of Education, while the other public tertiary institutions come under the Ministry of Higher Education. The foreign private universities and training institutes in the table below can set up affiliates in Sri Lanka as a foreign investment that comes under the Board of Investment. This arrangement allows for meeting some of the high demand for tertiary education, but will likely change when a new higher education law comes into effect. The higher education law was expected to allow

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riots of July 1983 in Colombo, which is the date used for the start of the civil war. It should be noted here that the official policy documents of the Government recognize a special contribution of education to achieving reconciliation (see "Education Framework Sector Development Framework, Ministry of Education (2007) and Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission, Presidential Commission (2012). These relate to the language policy in schools, the overall curriculum, and other aspects. Both of the projects under review here and the follow-up projects have activities related to social cohesion.

for academic accreditation of private as well as public universities, but it was recently withdrawn from parliamentary debate due to strong criticism from public university professors and student unions who voice the fear it will reduce support for public higher education. The parliamentary committee responsible for higher education said that more time is needed for public consultation. It is also possible that the needed measures will take the form of a series of regulations as opposed to a single comprehensive law. Table 1.2 below gives higher education enrollments by type of institution.

Table 1.2 Higher Education Enrollment by Type of Institution

Type of Institution	***Number Enrolled***	***Share of Enrollment (%)***
Public University	73,491	19
Open University	28,569	7
Postgraduate Institutes	9,015	2
External Degree Programs	225,208	58
Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technology Education	8,135	2
Private Higher Education Institutes	45,700	12
TOTAL	**390,118**	**100**

Source: World Bank 2009

1.7 There are 15 public and only 3 currently recognized private universities (these had been in operation during colonial times). Although tertiary level education enrolls around 390,000 students according to official statistics, only 19 percent of this is in the 15 full-time public universities, while 58 percent of this is in the external degree programs of public universities. These external degree programs originated many years ago when the University of London had such arrangements with Sri Lanka, as it did with India and other colonial countries at the time. As the name implies, these students are external to the university and do not attend lectures on campus, and it resembles to some extent a correspondence course. However, this evolved from a relatively small program under the public universities to its present day size, as the demand for higher education was strong. External degree students, many of whom are also working full or part-time, are eligible to take the degree examinations, but the complaint is often voiced that they receive very little academic support and thus must study mainly on their own, with less than 10 percent ultimately passing the degree examinations. There is also an Open University, which has about 12 percent of the total tertiary enrollment. As in Table 1-2 above, about 2 percent of enrollment is in the new public Sri Lanka Institutes for Advanced Technology Education and 12 percent in various types of private higher education and training institutions, some of which have foreign affiliation as mentioned above. The gross enrollment rate in higher education went from 9.5 percent (1990/91) to 21.2 percent (2007), although this is considered to be an overestimate by some analysts, especially given the large share of external degree students in the official statistics.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

1.8 Despite the achievements in access at all levels, there are concerns about learning achievement and quality. Inequity in learning and resources exist in the poor rural areas and provinces compared to the more affluent ones. At the university level, quality and relevance have become the major concern, especially as unemployment among university graduates has become such a major issue.

SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

1.9 General unemployment has declined over the years to 4.9 percent in 2010, but youth unemployment, defined for ages 15 to 29, was still high at 17.1 percent[2]. Precise figures for unemployment for university graduates are not available, but the prevailing belief is that it is high. One retrospective survey of graduates from University of Colombo found that four years after graduation only half had found a job (see Gunatilaka, Mayer, and Vodopivec, 2010). Another study by the Department of Manpower Planning in the Ministry of Productivity (2011) identifies some causes for high unemployment among graduates. First, new job creation in the labor market is not sufficient to absorb the supply of new graduates. Second, the private sector relies more on non-graduates with technical qualifications and English fluency since many graduates are in arts and studied in the local language. As a result, there are long queues for public sector jobs which are preferred by graduates because they see it as having more job security and being less demanding in work effort compared to private companies. It should be noted that this is not a recent phenomenon as Sri Lanka was one of the early countries to be identified as having a graduate unemployment problem (see Seers, 1971).

EDUCATION FINANCING

1.10 Spending on education in total is about 1.9 percent of GDP, which is US$50 billion in 2010, with 0.5 percent of GDP on public higher education. The financing of the universities is done through the University Grants Commission, but the funding methodology is considered ad hoc in that it simply gives a percentage increase, using the same budget categories and based in part upon the negotiating power of individual institutions. Sector analytic work indicated the need for reform to relate funding of institutions to policy goals. In addition, most analysts consider this funding for education in general and higher education in particular relatively low compared to other middle income country comparators. This contrasts with the 1960s, when Sri Lanka was regarded as an outstanding performer in education among developing countries and spent as much as 4 to 5 percent of GDP on education.

1.11 With demographic pressure easing on the basic education age group, more spending per student could be possible to raise quality of education and learning. For example, the 5 – 9 year old population and the 10 -14 year old population are estimated to have declined from about 2 million in 1994 to 1.7 million in 2003. The new census of 2011-2012, the first census to cover the whole island since 1981, will shed more light upon this issue. More

[2] See Ministry of Finance and Planning 2011.

analysis is needed to see if increased spending on quality inputs could be offset by savings elsewhere, such as less teachers needed for a declining student population.

CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION IN SRI LANKA

1.12 The Bank has been involved in Sri Lanka education since the 1980s. Although Sri Lanka had a good reputation for the coverage of its primary education, the country was aware that the quality of its system needed improvement and invited to the Bank to help with sector analysis. Also, budgetary constraints that prevailed in the 1980s meant that Bank financing would help with investments to improve quality. Prior to the Improving Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education (2003) project, the Bank provided support through the Second General Education Project Credit (1997) and the Teacher Education and Teacher Deployment Credit (1996). Together with the Government, the Bank has undertaken major sector reports and reviews that provided the analytical basis for the projects under review. The Bank reviewed the tertiary sector in the Towers of Learning Report (World Bank 2009) and basic/secondary education in the Transforming School Education report (World Bank 2011d). This provided the analytical basis for more support to the sector with the Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century Project (2010-2016 US$ 40 million) and the Transformation of School Education Program (2011- 2017 US$ 100 million).

1.13 The main donors after the Bank are Japanese Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The JBIC supports some school infrastructure in the provinces and its funds flow to the provinces through the government budgetary mechanism, the same as for the Bank's Education Sector Development Project. The ADB supported a traditional investment project for secondary education in 2005, but in 2007 also planned to move over to using a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) mechanism by integrating its funds into the government flow of funds[3]. However, it did not do so although the ADB and others support the SWAp policy framework through parallel financing. Other donors provide smaller amounts using the traditional stand-alone mode in specific areas of support. UNICEF focuses on schools in conflict affected areas. Germany's Ministry for International Cooperation, United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) primarily provide grant funds for technical assistance in support of the overall Education Sector Development Framework Program.

[3] See Vaillancourt 2009, The World Bank defines a SWAp as "an approach to a locally owned program for a coherent sector in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, moving forward in the use of country systems. SWAps represent a shift in the focus, relationship, and behavior of donors and governments. They involve high levels of donor and country coordination for the achievement of program goals, and can be financed through parallel financing, pooled financing, general budget support, or a combination."

2. Improving Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education Project

Objectives, Design, and Relevance

Objectives

2.1 The *Improving Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education* was approved on June 10, 2003 and became effective on August 25, 2003. The objective, as stated in the Credit Agreement and Project Appraisal Document, was to support the government's tertiary education reform program by enhancing institutional capacities conducive to greater relevance and quality in undergraduate education**.** The rationale for the project is based upon the analysis by the Government (the Presidential Task Force on University Education 1998) and the Bank during project identification and preparation. The issues to be addressed involved the unemployment problem of university graduates, the need to update the curriculum and make it more relevant to labor market demand, and the need to modernize both curriculum (content and equipment) and administration in higher education. There was no specific mention of connections of higher education to basic and secondary education. The project closed, after a six month extension, on June 30, 2010. The credit was almost fully disbursed.

Relevance of the Objectives

2.2 The relevance of project objectives is rated substantial. Given the difficulties of graduates finding employment in the private sector, it was important to reform the HE system to make it better and more relevant to the country's economic needs. There are, however, many important issues not addressed in the project objectives, but it may not be realistic to take on many more issues.

2.3 The objectives related to quality and relevance, and capacity building to their achievement that are directly relevant to the Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) for 2008, as well as to the prior Strategy of 2003. The development of high level human capital for the private sector is an important element in the CAS objective of promoting the competitiveness of the economy. Improving education services, including higher education, is an important CAS objective. The objectives also are relevant to the Government strategy as put forth in the document "Reforms in University Education" by the Presidential Task Force on University Education (1998), which was widely discussed within Sri Lanka. On the basis of this the Government requested Bank support for higher education at the Paris Development Forum (2000). The reforms envisioned included a policy framework with performance incentives, improvements in quality and quality monitoring, improving employability of graduates for the private sector and increasing access (though quality was to be emphasized first).

2.4 Likewise, the project objective is relevant to the Government's strategy for higher education, as well as its overall economic vision (known as the Mahinda Chintana framework for a ten year development program). Both the Government vision and the CAS stress three

main areas: (i) achieving more equitable development through accelerated rural development, (ii) accelerating growth through increased investment in infrastructure, and (iii) strengthening public service delivery. The CAS 2008 also stressed the need to mitigate risks and proceed cautiously, given that the cease fire agreement in the separatist conflict had broken down and serious violence erupted again in 2006. Thus the CAS emphasized being conflict sensitive in all Bank operations. Even though the war has ended, there is still some risk that the underlying causes of the conflict might not be addressed. Thus the CAS emphasis on building social cohesion, which comes under the strategic area of promoting peace and dealing with the causes of the conflict, is still relevant and this higher education operation can contribute to that goal. Although social cohesion was not explicitly part of the objectives, it was referred to in many places in the project documents and the grants have criteria that social cohesion should be addressed.

Design

2.5 **Components.** The project defined two broad components. The first component was Building Capacity in the Tertiary Education System (later changed to Higher Education System). This involved strengthening capacity at the national level, including the Ministry of Higher Education and the University Grants Commission that determines funding allocations to universities. Building up the management capacity at the individual university level was also included in this component, especially via providing training and a program of Institutional Block Grants, which required submission of proposals for strategic planning and institutional strengthening. Strengthening quality assurance mechanisms were to be developed under the Board for Quality Assurance (later renamed the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council) which was initially set under the University Grants Commission with the intent that it would become independent later (so far it has become semi-autonomous but still under University Grants Commission).

2.6 The second component was aimed more directly to quality and relevance activities. A program of competitive grants (the Quality Enhancement Fund) was established in which individual departments of the universities would prepare proposals, the best of which would be selected by peer review to receive grants for implementation. The criteria for selection would be publicized and training would be provided for proposal preparation, which was a new activity in Sri Lankan higher education. Another sub-component was the Tharuna Aruna II program for Improving the Employment Prospects of Unemployed Graduates. At the time of appraisal the Government requested the Bank to add this subcomponent to the project so as to assist in improving the Tharuna Aruna I program that it had started in 1997. The Tharuna Aruna, which translates as Young Professional Program, was an internship program that placed graduates in private sector firms for six months. They would hopefully continue with the firm or find employment in another one. It was estimated that there were about 27,000 unemployed graduates in 2003 and the Government was concerned about the potential for social unrest, as had happened in the past, and also the waste of human capital.

2.7 The detailed activities in the original components as described in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) are listed in the table below:

Table 2.1 Activities within Undergraduate Education Components and Actual Costs

Component 1: Building Capacity (US$17.14 million equivalent)	*Component 2: Relevance and Quality (US$38.183 million equivalent)*
1a. This subcomponent supports efforts to improve planning and management capacity at the system level. Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) and Labor Market Observatory were to be established.	2a. Establish a Quality Enhancement Fund of competitive block grants awarded for programs to improve relevance and quality of academic programs. Training was provided to assist faculty in how to prepare proposals. Training and technical assistance in grant administration was to be available to those who win awards.
1b. Establishing the Board for Quality Assurance (BQA). The BQA is responsible for developing policies related to quality criteria and organizing independent peer reviews of self-assessments by faculties and national and international accreditation agencies.	2b. Tharuna Aruna II (Young Professional II) program. This subcomponent support training initiatives that lead to more appropriate and productive employment for a maximum of 10,000 currently unemployed graduates. It was the successor to the Tharuna Aruna I programs started by the Government in 1997.
1c. Strengthening management of universities and faculties. Institutional Block Grants were awarded for this purpose, especially for English and ICT training labs. Improved social harmony activities to be supported.	
1d. Enhancing public awareness. This subcomponent supports a continuous public awareness campaign and stakeholder dialogue to build consensus on the reform programs and disseminate information about their achievements	
1e. Monitoring and Evaluation. This subcomponent supports research activities to monitor and evaluate the impact of project investments on important academic, economic and social outcomes.	

Source: World Bank (2010)

2.8 **M&E design.** The M&E activities were designed as part of Component 1 of Building Institutional Capacity. A number of indicators were specified for which baseline and end of project target values were to be collected. Some of these indicators came from the individual universities and statistical agencies. Others required special studies that were to be contracted to research institutes and consulting firms.

2.9 **Financing.** The project was financed by a $40.3 million equivalent International Development Association credit as a Sector Investment Loan with a government contribution of $10.7 million equivalent. There was no co-financing or parallel financing by other donors.

2.10 **Implementation arrangements.** The institutional framework for implementation at the national level thus included the Ministry of Higher Education as well as the University Grants Commission, which was home to the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council. Each university also had an implementation unit, known as the Local Technical Secretariat, to liaise with the national entities and to coordinate activities within the universities.

Relevance of Design

2.11 The relevance of project design is also substantial. The Results Framework (described schematically in the table below) was adequate to achieve the objectives of improving quality and relevance. Each of the project interventions has a clear mapping onto

the elements of the project objectives. In terms of design, the use of block grants and competitive funding to universities was an appropriate mechanism in the Sri Lanka context for providing incentives to universities to achieve project objectives of improving relevance and quality. The use of such grants, which can be a demand-driven way of identifying individual institutional needs, has become a standard approach now in higher education projects in the Bank over the past decade or so (see Berk 2002). Experience with such grants in other higher education projects, ranging from Hungary to Indonesia, show that allowing institutions to identify their needs, but within a framework of criteria for relevance and quality, is more effective than a top down approach in delivering results.

2.12 The project design was also relevant to the Government's concern about graduate unemployment and the Bank responded to the Government request to help restructure the Tharuna Aruna program aimed at promoting the employability of unemployed graduates for jobs in the private sector. The dropout rate was high (45 percent) and the private sector firms did not perceive the graduates as attractive candidates. While reforming higher education would not help those already graduated, it was important to support somehow their employment prospects. The project improved the program by introducing a training component in skills valued by the private sector such as English fluency, basic Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills and development of interpersonal and team work capabilities. The project design was selective in that it did not try to address all important issues in higher education, but stressed priority objectives that were feasible in the Sri Lanka context. For example, the large number of students enrolled in external degree programs or the need to improve research and graduate education were postponed for a later phase of reform.

Table 2.2 Results Framework for Undergraduate Education Project

	Objective		
Results Chain	***Institutional Capacity***	***Relevance***	***Quality***
Outcomes	-National and university level planning capacity improved	-Average waiting time to first job employability	-Grade point average -Mechanisms for accreditation and quality assurance
Intermediate Outcomes	-Upgrade Policy and Planning Development Unit in the Ministry of Education	-English fluency for private sector -IT capacity for employability	-New academic programs
Outputs	-Higher Education Information Management System -Institutional Block Grant Program	-Young Professional Program -Labor Market Observatory	-Quality Enhancement Fund Grant Program -Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council
Inputs	ICT equipment, training	ICT labs, language labs	ICT equipment, science labs

Source: Derived by author from the Project Appraisal Document

Implementation

2.13 The project became effective two months after approval on August 25, 2003 and had a satisfactory start-up with the commitment of the Government still being high and with an adequate staffing of the Policy Planning and Development Unit, the implementation unit in the Ministry of Higher Education. Throughout most of implementation (from July 2003 to June 2010), the project was rated satisfactory in the Implementation Status Reports, except once in Jan. 2007, when the rating was moderately satisfactory. As project activities proceeded, disbursement took place at a regular pace, close to the planned disbursement schedule. However, appreciation of the SDR versus the US dollar, in addition to some reallocations described below, brought the IDA credit to US$45.5 million equivalent and the Government contribution to US$9.8 million equivalent.

Implementation Experience

2.14 Project objectives remained the same throughout, but there were some changes and challenges during implementation. The Tharuna Aruna II program to promote graduate employment was cancelled by the mutual agreement of the Bank and Government because the new Government that came in after the April 2004 elections decided to provide public employment for graduates who could not find employment in the private sector. According to IEG mission discussions with informed observers, this practice of providing public sector jobs for graduates had been done before, especially with promises around election times. Given the role of student unrest in Sri Lankan politics since the 1970s, a large group of unemployed graduates was a sensitive issue with the Government. As a result, many participants in Tharuna Aruna II, anticipating public sector jobs, which they preferred over private sector jobs, dropped out of the Tharuna Aruna II program. Many of these, who were arts graduates, were hired as teachers by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in their local areas in the provinces. Thus the backlog of unemployed graduates was cleared up.

2.15 On December 26, 2004, the devastating tsunami hit Sri Lanka as well many other Indian Ocean countries. Since the aim of this subcomponent was to promote private sector employment of unemployed graduates, with the agreement of the Bank and Government, the remaining US$9 million in funds for this subcomponent were reallocated to the Tsunami Emergency Relief Project in 2006, following all of the usual legal procedures for such reallocations. This, together with appreciation of the SDR, resulted in the reduction of disbursement to US$45 million (90 percent of that planned). Table 2.3 below givens the estimates at appraisal versus the actual project costs at completion.

2.16 The development of the Higher Education Management Information System proved to be much more challenging that envisioned at appraisal. One reason for this was that the design and specifications of the system in the PAD were not very detailed. More time was needed to complete detailed specifications for procurement purposes. The Bank team and counterparts agreed during implementation that there should be two systems, one for the national level for strategic planning by the UGC and Ministry of Higher Education, and the

Table 2.3 Appraisal and Actual Costs by Component (US$ million equivalent)

Components	*Appraisal Estimate*	*Actual*	*Percentage of Appraisal*
Building Institutional Capacity	12.90	17.14	132
Improving Relevance and Quality	32.00	38.18	119
Total Baseline Cost	**44.90**	**0.00**	
Physical Contingency	1.30	0.00	-
Price Contingency	4.80	0.00	-
Total Project Costs	**51.00**	**55.32**	**108.47**
Total Financing Required	**51.00**	**55.32**	**108.47**

Source: Bank Data Base. *Note*: Exchange rate fluctuations of the SDR increased the value of the credit and actual project cost figures.

other to be used at the university level for their own management purposes. During discussions about this with the IEG mission, it was reported that the whole design and development process was much more complex than imagined. It was not until mid-term of the project that the development really started up with the signing of contracts with two firms, one for each part of the system. The costs also exceeded estimates and this was covered by using part of a reallocation of project funds (US$1.84 million) that took place in March 2009. Moreover, many change requests were made by the universities, resulting in some disputes with the contractors. These were resolved and the system is still only about 75 percent complete according to estimates by some staff of the Policy Planning and Development Unit, who believe that those parts of the design not completed can be done so with Government funds. However, the system is still useful and fulfilling its main purpose.

2.17 Under the Quality Enhancement Fund, two rounds of grant competitions were successfully implemented under this subcomponent. A third round was added later during implementation at the request of the Ministry of Higher Education and the University Grants Commission. This third round was aimed at faculties of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, which were not able to win grants in the first two rounds. This also included university of Jaffna in the Northern Province that needed more time due to delays from the separatist conflict. The costs of this additional round was covered from the reallocation project funds that took place in March 2009 (see above) and in October 2009 (US$2.62 million). The purpose of this was to provide more IT training in the academic programs for the arts students to prepare them better for the labor market. In addition, Advanced Technology Institutes were allowed to participate in the third round.

Implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation

Safeguards

2.18 No safeguards were triggered by project activities. The project adhered to Bank guidelines for both environmental and social issues. An Environment Management Plan was prepared for each rehabilitation or expansion of facilities under the project. The project had no negative social impacts such as involuntary resettlement.

Fiduciary

2.19 No financial management issues arose during the audits and reviews of financial management of the project. The implementing entities performed according to Bank financial guidelines with regard to acceptable financial management arrangements. The capacity of the financial management staff allowed for accurate and timely financial records.

2.20 Financial procurement activities were handled in a decentralized way by the universities using the grants awarded through the project. This required extensive training to develop the procurement capacity of the Policy Planning and Development Unit and the Local Technical Secretariats. No major procurement issues were encountered. Financial management reporting was handled by the trained staff within the Policy Planning and Development Unit. These reports were acceptable based upon annual financial audits carried out according to Bank policy.

Achievement of the Objectives

ENHANCING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

2.21 The first objective of enhancing institutional capacity was substantially achieved. As enumerated in the previous section, the introduction of Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) improved the planning and implementation capacity considerably. Despite the fact that the National Information System is not 100 percent operational in the way desired, the University System at each institution is a big step forward, and the partially operative National Information Management System is useful to the University Grants Commission and may still develop fully in the follow-on higher education project or on its own with Government funding. The Institutional Block Grants also played a significant role in enhancing institutional capacity, especially by promoting programs that improved the quality and relevance objectives. Public awareness activities helped to increase understanding of the project objectives and activities both within the academic community and the public at large. Numerous conferences were held and press releases given to the newspapers. The Undergraduate Education project website was set up to inform the public and numerous visits (12,358 over the time of the project) to the site were recorded.

2.22 The project achieved a number of results that improved institutional capacity at the system and the individual institutional levels. The activities under Component 1 were designed to align with this dimension of the overall objective. The establishment of the Higher Education Management Information System at the system level and the individual institutions strengthened the capacity for analysis and planning in the overall higher education system. At the University level, the Student Information Module, made standard administrative tasks more efficient and also provided the university management with useful information for planning and decision making. However, the National Management Information System does not connect up to the university-level System as planned due to technical problems encountered during its specification and implementation. As in other higher education projects, this task was more complex than anticipated and the IEG mission was informed that each university also wanted customization changes that would take more time. The management information system of each university is a stand-alone system, which

helps the individual universities, but since they are not connected in real time to the national one, the system did not fulfill the promise of national planning that was initially intended. Nonetheless, around 4,100 personnel of the Ministry, University Grants Commission, and individual universities were trained in national planning and monitoring and evaluation systems, spreading awareness of best practices throughout the higher education system. Institutional Block Grants were also awarded to universities if they submitted a corporate plan and went through the evaluation procedures of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council. The Grants, although not competitive, still helped to improve infrastructure as evidenced by the upgrades of computer labs and networks as well more modern instrumentation in science and engineering labs. Given that each block grant needed to have a strategic plan as a condition of eligibility for a grant, it also introduced a modern planning culture into the university administration.

IMPROVING RELEVANCE OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

2.23 The objective of improving the relevance of higher education is rated as substantial. Both the institutional capacity enhancements and the Quality Enhancement Fund helped bring about more labor market relevance. Private sector employers reported to the IEG mission that they can now see changes in the soft skills of graduates coming out, as well as ICT and English language skills. Although the Tharuna Aruna II, the Young Professional internship program, was cancelled due to the Government reverting back to its practice of public sector jobs for graduates, the objective of increased relevance was substantially achieved by the other two components, which were independent of the Tharuna Aruna II program that dealt with the backlog of unemployed graduates from past years.

2.24 Improving relevance was interpreted in the project documentation to mean better employment prospects for undergraduates. The average waiting time before getting a first job after graduation declined from 14 months (June 2004) to 4.5 months (Sept. 2009). Over the same time period for science-based programs the average waiting time declined from 10.6 to 3.5 months and for social science/humanities it declined from 21.6 to 8.7 months. This is based upon data collected from tracer studies conducted by the Quality Enhancement Fund programs. The establishment of the Labor Market Observatory helped to develop data that provided feedback on the relevance of to undergraduate programs. Specifically, it provided feedback in judging the relevance of competitive grants under the Quality Enhancement Fund, especially those grants that established new programs. The IEG mission had detailed discussions with the Department of Manpower in the Ministry of Productivity, which has taken over the functions of the Labor Market Observatory. A recent tracer study (2010 data) was conducted by the Department of Manpower, which showed that the structural dimensions of the graduate unemployment problem are pretty much the same. The Arts graduates are still most susceptible to this, but discussions the IEG mission had with private employers indicate that the English and ICT training being offered to Arts graduates is starting to have a positive impact on their employability. However, this anecdotal evidence has not yet been documented with hard statistics.

2.25 New programs in ICT and English were instituted in order to prepare graduates for the labor market, especially as part of a global knowledge economy. As part of the Institutional Block Grants and Quality Enhancement Fund, computer and language labs were

set up to supplement the classroom based theoretical training. Faculty and students at the universities visited expressed the opinion to the IEG mission that these were critical resources they lacked before the project. Given the time frame in which relevant resources were provided, the plausible result is that average ICT scores improved (from 49 to 56 over 2005 to 2008) on a test given to a sample from participating universities, and tests on English language skills also improved (from 59 to 69 over 2005 to 2008). The testing program was designed by an international consulting firm that was contracted to assist with the M&E. This subcomponent trained 4,331 graduates in ICT and English and provided them with some subsidized private sector job experience.

2.26 In addition to the hard technical skills of their academic disciplines, the Tharuna Aruna II program aimed to develop "soft skills", such as a strong work ethic with willingness to follow the pace of work in a private sector job. Although the program was discontinued because the public sector employment program introduced by the Government in 2004 cleared up the backlog of unemployed graduates, the IEG mission discussed some of the Quality Enhancement Fund and Institutional Block Grant projects that also included internships in private companies, so that students could see how inter-personal skills are valuable in the work place. Other projects emphasized team work among the students involved and required them to make presentations to improve their communication skills. As one private employer emphasized to the mission, they are concerned with more than just the grade point average of the graduate, but with the all around capabilities and attitudes. Another aspect of relevance to the social development of the country was providing incentives for programs that promote social cohesion and harmony, especially germane to Sri Lanka as it seeks to reconstruct the economy after long years of civil war. Each proposal for Institutional Block Grants had to provide some activity or aspect for social cohesion. The IEG mission saw some examples in universities visited, for example, measures to attract students from all over the country so that the different ethnic and religious groups would interact. The University of Jaffna in the Northern province, very much affected by conflict, has had some success in attracting students from the south to its new applied mathematics programs. The IEG mission found that in all the faculties visited and in the ministries there was a widespread awareness and concern to make progress on improving social cohesion. However, no systematic evidence was available.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

2.27 The objective of improving the quality of higher education is rated as substantial. The Quality Enhancement Fund played a big role in launching new teaching methods involving more interactive modes of learning and inquiry appropriate for university level education. The Institutional Block Grants also helped in this by providing computer labs and teaching-learning technologies that were not available before the project. In addition, the activities prompted by the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council reviews can also be cited as contributing to quality of undergraduate programs.

2.28 The Quality Enhancement Fund achieved a number of results that demonstrate improved quality. The Grade Point Averages remained on the same level: 2.94 (2004) to 2.98 (2009). More direct evidence is the ICT and English scores cited above, which also indicate improvement in quality as a result of the extensive improvements in curriculum and

facilities. The IEG mission discussed this at the universities visited with faculty and saw that the equipment was available to and used by students. The competitive procedures for applying to the Quality Enhancement Fund for grants also had an impact on raising quality concerns within the higher education system. The establishment and start up of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council also indicates improvements in the overall system as more universities, especially the weaker ones come into compliance with the quality criteria concerning staff and facilities available to students. The Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council conducted external assessments in public universities, which also did their own self-assessments as part of the process. Over 32,000 students and 3,200 staff members benefited from these quality enhancing activities. A number of documents on quality were produced by the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council and the overall process of quality assurance, despite the detailed efforts of self-evaluation and external evaluation, is now widely accepted in Sri Lanka higher education. Most faculty felt that this has moved Sri Lanka out of its old fashioned academic approach and that the students are benefiting from improved academic programs. Other countries in the region have recognized this and requested assistance from the Sri Lankan Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council in order to set up their own quality assurance systems.

Efficiency

2.29 Efficiency of the project is rated modest. The analytical basis for evaluating project efficiency was well developed in the PAD Annex on the basis of standard economic cost-benefit analysis of the project. The PAD Annex used a best case, some intermediate cases, and a worst case scenario based upon assumptions about increased earnings from higher education (relative to next lowest level) in the labor market and decreased duration of job search. The best case used a 7 percent earnings increase and decreased job search of 12 months while the worst case was 3 percent earnings increase and 3 months decreased job search. Following standard cost benefit analysis, the PAD analysis then calculated the net present value (using 5 percent discount rate) of the benefits streams from the above cases and compared this to the total project costs. In the best case scenario the benefits exceeded costs by 180 percent and in the middle case by 150 percent. In the worst case the benefit was 75 percent of the costs. Although no similar analysis was done after completion of the project by the project team, analysis of labor force survey data (2008) for the economic and sector work in preparation for the follow on projects would suggest results would be somewhere close to the best case scenario (see World Bank 2011d). For example, the earnings differential for higher education showed male graduates earned 284 percent more than workers with no education (base case) and male A-level certificate holders earned 151 percent more than the base case. Thus the earnings differentials for higher education appeared to still be large.

2.30 The efficiency of the Institutional Block grants and the Quality Enhancement Fund grants appeared to be high in that the benefits, although hard to quantify, were rated as very significant by almost everyone the IEG mission interviewed. Moreover, these were high impact areas for the project to address, given its objectives and other sector issues.

2.31 However, given the modest results of the Tharuna Aruna II program during its 2 years of operation, it is not likely that efficiency of the project funds for that purpose was high, and

the transfer of funds to tsunami relief seemed more pressing. Also, the project got off to a slow start in some areas and ended six months late.

Ratings

PROJECT OUTCOME

2.32 The overall project outcome is moderately satisfactory. The relevance of project objectives and of design was substantial and each of the three objectives was substantially achieved. Efficiency was modest, however, amounting to a moderate shortcoming.

RISK TO DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

2.33 The risk to development outcome is rated as moderate given the progress made in building institutional capacity and the widespread support for the new competitive funding mechanisms introduced by the project. Discussions with academic and government officials indicate that they feel it was a success and on that basis want to continue it. There is wide-spread recognition within the academic community that quality assurance and accreditation was needed and the initial resistance has been overcome. The Government and institutions have accepted the approach. At the Government level and within the political parties, there is support for the broader reforms to be introduced by the new higher education project. However, the remaining uncertainty relates to the precise role that will be allowed for private higher education under the new Higher Education Law being discussed in Parliament. The IEG mission was informed that the Government felt more time was needed to discuss the law and arrange for wider consultations, which should help to develop stronger support.

BANK PERFORMANCE

2.34 The overall performance of the Bank was moderately satisfactory. Bank performance during preparation was moderately satisfactory, while during supervision was satisfactory.

2.35 **Quality at entry** is rated moderately satisfactory. The Bank prepared the operation with the Government and Sri Lanka academics that involved a careful sector analysis. The Bank also reviewed relevant lessons from other higher education projects in all regions. The risks from the on-going separatist conflict were also assessed and taken into account in the need to build social cohesion and harmony through higher education. A major shortcoming of preparation was M&E design, which was not sufficiently developed. One important indicator of unemployment was unrealistic and other indicators were lacking baseline values. The Higher Education Management Information System was only described in terms of its general aims instead of having operational specifications close to readiness.

2.36 **Quality of supervision** was satisfactory. The Bank team recognized the shortcomings in M&E and worked hard to overcome them. It also worked hard to bring the development and specifications of the Higher Education Management Information System up to speed. Supervision was carried out at regular intervals twice annually. There were two changes in Bank Task Team Leader (TTL), but in each case the transition was smooth since the new TTL had been a core team member already familiar with the project. The Bank

helped to keep up progress on the Higher Education Management Information System when severe difficulties were encountered in the working relationship between the ICT firm selected as contractor and the end-users. The IEG mission noted very positive feedback during the field visits concerning the implementation support provided by the Bank implementation team. There was a positive spirit of joint problem solving that was much appreciated by the local counterparts.

BORROWER PERFORMANCE

2.37 Overall the performance of the Borrower was satisfactory. The Government performed satisfactorily, and so did the implementing agencies.

2.38 The **Government performance** was satisfactory. Although the new Government after the 2005 elections discontinued the Tharuna Aruna II program, it remained committed to the overall project objectives. The political party that won the election had promised to provide public sector jobs to graduates, something which has been done in the past elections. They delivered on that promise and the Tharuna Aruna II was no longer needed. While the Government's concern with social unrest arising out of youth unemployment is understandable, given such incidents in the past, the need to improve the relevance of undergraduate education remains. The new Government continued to support the relevance objective of the project. Given the emphasis on social cohesion, especially after the cessation of the military conflict in May 2009, the Government supported the extension of time to allow Jaffna University in the Northern Province to receive funding and complete its grant activities, all of which were delayed due to renewed outbreak of the separatist conflict in 2006. The IEG mission visited Jaffna University to see its progress in rebuilding, which is impressive to date, although more is still needed to make up for the effects of the conflict.

2.39 The **performance of the implementing agencies** for the project was satisfactory. The two agencies most directly responsible for the implementation were the Ministry of Higher Education and its Policy Planning and Development Unit. The Unit in particular had a dedicated professional staff that was a big factor in the success of implementation of Quality Enhancement Fund and the Institutional Block Grants. Within each university, there was a Local Technical Secretariat, staffed by professors and sometime by administrators, that was responsible at the institutional level for the grants received. This included many aspects of grant administration, such as procurement in conjunction with Policy Planning and Development Unit assistance, and preparation of quarterly progress reports. The IEG mission had meetings with the Unit and the Local Technical Secretariat during university visits, which served to confirm reports concerning their work and due diligence, which they viewed as part of their regular responsibility. The quality assurance activities were carried out by the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council, which was placed under the University Grants Commission. The universities visited by the IEG mission pointed to the value of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council activities in improving their operations and academic programs.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

2.40 Overall quality of M&E is modest.

2.41 Some shortcomings in the **design of M&E** in the PAD delayed the effective start of M&E. For example, one of the five key indicators specified higher employment rates among future graduates, which would not have been feasible until after project completion. Other indicators, such as English and ICT tests, although relevant to project objectives, did not have baseline data at appraisal. Grade point average was also specified, but not available as a baseline indicator, and the overall relevance of Grade Point Average might be questionable, since it is not standardized across universities. More subject specific academic performance would have been more relevant. The design of the Higher Education Management Information System could have contributed to the M&E effort, but the System was not well specified in the PAD.

2.42 **Implementation of M&E** got off to a slow start, partly because of the design issues and also lack of suitable staff. An M&E specialist was recruited in the second year, the Bank supervision teams helped to sort out issues, and baseline values were collected. The unrealistic indicator of employment rates of graduates was replaced by one measuring time to get first job using a tracer study of participants in Quality Enhancement Fund programs. Each individual grant program also had indicators to assess their progress. The Higher Education Management Information System had difficulties in design and start up. IEG mission discussions with the ICT directors in the universities visited indicated they thought the System was not flexible enough to adapt to their institutions. Thus, each institution had their own university-level System for their own administrative purposes, but the national System, which was intended to link to the System in each institution, was not able to function in that way. The full potential of the Higher Education Management Information System is still to be realized.

2.43 The **utilization of M&E** results became more effective near the end of the project. M&E reports on outcomes, outputs, and inputs were compiled and shared in regular meetings of project stakeholders, including university administrators not directly involved in the grants. In some institutions, the IEG mission found that there was sharing of information with representatives of the private sector in order to get feedback on the employability of graduates.

3. Education Sector Development Project

Objectives, Design, and Relevance

Objectives

3.1 The US$60.0 million *Education Sector Development Project* was approved on December 15, 2005 and became effective on February 21, 2006. It was financed by an IDA credit. The objective, as stated in the Credit Agreement and the Project Appraisal Document, was to: (a) promote equitable access to basic education (grade 1-9) and secondary education (grade 10-13); (b) improve the quality of education; (c) enhance the economic efficiency and equity of resource allocation and distribution within the education system; and (d) strengthen education governance and service delivery. The project closed, as planned, on June 30, 2011. The credit was fully disbursed. .

Relevance of the Objectives

3.2 The relevance of the ***project objectives*** is substantial. All four of the objective (or thematic areas) are closely aligned with the overall objectives of the most recent CAS (2008) as well as the Education Sector Development Framework Program (2007) that outlined the same thematic areas as above. Moreover, the CAS and project objectives fit well with the Government's policy for both the overall economy and the education sector. The CAS had three areas of focus: equitable development across regions and rural areas, accelerating growth, and strengthening public service delivery (including education). All of this was to be done in a way sensitive to the conflict situation in Sri Lanka, which had seen the ceasefire of 2002 deteriorate and a resulting escalation of conflict in the North and East. These are the same areas that are given priority in the Government's Ten Year Development Framework.

Design

3.3 **Components.** There were a number activities grouped under each of the four thematic objectives:

3.4 **Equitable access to basic and secondary education**. Four key initiatives were provided for all children aged for basic (grades 1-9) and secondary education **(**grades 10-13): (1) demand side incentives for school attendance, (2) upgrading the school network to relax constraints on geographically equitable access to good quality basic and secondary education, (3) strengthening special education programs for children with special learning needs, (4) strengthening non-formal education programs for adolescents not in school.

3.5 **Improving the quality of education**. This component aimed to improve learning outcomes by developing generic skills, such as creativity, communication, problem solving, and non-cognitive achievements. There were three policy initiatives: (1) restructuring and upgrading curriculum, (2) teacher development, (3) modernizing exams and testing.

3.6 **Improving economic efficiency and equity of resource allocation**. There were three policy initiatives under this theme: (1) establishing a medium term budget framework; (2) developing an overarching education sector development plan; and (3) establishing a public expenditure and quality education tracking system.

3.7 **Improving governance and delivery of education**. There were three policy initiatives under this theme: (1) establishing a balanced control model of school based management; (2) conducting organizational analysis for capacity building; and (3) implementing a human resource development strategy.

3.8 **Implementation Arrangements.** The project was designed as a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) based upon a comprehensive education framework developed by the Government in partnership with the Bank. Other donors accepted the policy goals of the SWAp and participated through parallel financing of their investment projects. There were arrangements for an annual review with donors and efforts made to harmonize support. The Government and the Bank, as the two main SWAp partners, took the lead on these annual reviews. The institutional arrangements for a SWAp were appropriately developed with the Finance Commission, which is responsible for the provincial education budgets, playing an

active role. The arrangements for school based management, drawing cautiously upon lessons in other decentralization project, allowed the policy framework to be disseminated down to the school and classroom level (see section on achievements). The IDA credit funding was integrated into the government expenditures, rather than assigning procurement and disbursement to individual components. However, all project procurement followed agreed upon Bank procedures. As a SWAp, the policy objectives of the project were comprehensive and covered major themes relevant to improving sector wide performance. These project development objectives were derived from themes directly elaborated in the document "Education Sector Development Framework and Programme" (Ministry of Education 2007). There was no specific mention of connections to the labor market or higher education, but the project would develop general skills of critical thinking, English language, and ICT.

3.9 **Finance.** The Bank finance for the project was originally for US$60 million and an additional US$10 million was added in 2008. The project objectives remained unchanged and the additional financing was used to enhance the original objectives given that implementation and utilization of resources was proceeding well (see section on achievements). The additional Bank financing was also fully disbursed when the project closed on schedule.

Relevance of Design

3.10 The relevance of ***design*** is substantial, given that the objectives were actually broad policy themes that require sector wide action as opposed to the kind of specific activities of a traditional project. The design of the thematic component activities drew upon the latest research and sector work concerning how to connect project activities to results in terms of increased access, improved learning, and enhancing governance (see for example, Boissiere 2004). Thus, the results chain envisioned improving curriculum, developing teachers, and linking the budgeting of resources to improving learning as the major determinants of improving education outcomes. With respect to improving access, the project design provided demand side incentives as well as supply of school facilities within appropriate locations for all households. However, as noted in the IEG education portfolio review, increased inputs do not always translate into improved learning (see IEG 2011). Hence, it is necessary to have assessments of learning to verify learning outcomes, as was done in this project. The project design also included intensive and detailed participation by the Government, the relevant central agencies, as well as provincial governments. This resulted in a detailed understanding of how the education sector works so as to achieve results in Sri Lanka that was incorporated into the design of implementation. Table 3.1 gives a schematic description of the Results Framework while the evidence for extent of achieving results in given in the section below on efficacy.

Table 3.1 Results Framework: Education sector Development Project

	Objectives			
Results Chain	***Increase Access***	***Improve Quality***	***Enhance Resource Allocation***	***Strengthen Governance***
Outcomes	-Net Enrollment Rate(age 6-14) -Completion Rate (to grade 9)	-Cognitive achievement mother language -Cognitive achievement math	-Effective resource allocation to education goals	-Effective decentralization to province and school level
Intermediate Outcomes	-Decrease out of school children	-New curriculum -Schools with teaching plans -Textbooks on time -Teacher instruction manuals -Exam item bank	-Recurrent budget to higher order learning processes -Capital budget to higher order learning processes -Repair/replace education capital stock	-Improved performance in PSI schools
Outputs	-Upgrade network of school facilities -Special education -Non-formal programs	-Teacher centers for multilingual training -Social cohesion programs	-Expenditure Tracking System	-Program for School Improvement -HR development plan for MOE and provinces
Inputs	-Demand side incentives, -Small scale civil works	-Teacher Training, public awareness	-ICT equipment, training	-Training

Source: Based on the Project Appraisal Document
Note: Objectives are given across the top row and just given a label to save space

Implementation

3.11 While the objectives were not modified during the project implementation, in 2008 US$10 million was added to the original funding of US$60 million. It was clear by then that the project was making significant progress, and additional initiatives could be supported under the original themes. The added initiatives were consistent with the CAS and the original objectives, and included activities to expand educational opportunities in poor regions and conflict affected regions. Also, more emphasis was placed on English language and higher order thinking skills to support the ten year development framework for accelerating Sri Lanka's progress to becoming an upper middle income country.

3.12 The project financing is listed in project documents as a Sector Investment Credit, but the implementation arrangement is defined in all the project documents as SWAp. It is regarded as a SWAp because of the wide ranging and coherent policy approach, the use of local budgeting systems and the flexibility of arrangements for donor contributions. In the end, the only donor to use the local budgeting systems was the Bank, but the other donors recognized the broad policy framework. The institutional framework for implementation followed the provisions of the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan constitution (1987) that

allowed for devolution of some government services (that is, health and education) to the provincial levels of government. The provincial governments are structured parallel to the central in that there is a Provincial Council under which comes a Provincial Education Department. These provincial education authorities deliver education services following the national policy and guidelines of the Ministry of Education (with the exception of some national schools which come directly under the Ministry).

3.13 The planned and actual expenditures do not follow the project components as is done in a Specific Investment Loan. As this is a SWAp, the Bank disbursed US$72 million (including the additional grant) over the lifetime of the project. The report-based method of disbursement was used with the Financial Management Reports being used as the basis for the Bank's no-objections and tranches being released twice a year. These Financial Management Reports also provided SWAp-type implementation arrangements similar to joint reviews of progress and policy dialogue. Two special accounts were set up, one for the national level activities with the Ministry of Education and the other for the provincial level authorities. The Government education sector budget was planned at appraisal to be US$2,700 million equivalent over the project lifetime, which went through the normal Government financial procedures. There were no analyses made at project completion concerning the actual amount of Government budget allocated to the basic education sector. Project progress was monitored through a system of M&E indicators rather than though disbursement profiles.

3.14 Implementation took place throughout all of the provinces since education is one of the Government services that were devolved to the provinces. Thus the provincial structures of government, organized in a manner parallel to the national one, were in effect the implementation agencies on the front line of delivery.

Table 3.2 Project Cost by Thematic Components ($US million equivalent)

Component	*Appraisal Estimate*	*Additional Financing*	*Actual at Completion*	*Actual as a Percent of Appraisal*
Promoting Equitable Access	15.00	2.50	18.19	104
Improving Quality	15.00	2.50	18.19	104
Efficiency and Equity of Resource Allocation	15.00	2.50	18.19	104
Governance and Delivery	15.00	2.50	18.19	104
Total Project Costs	60.00	10.00	72.74	104
Total Finance Required	60.00	10.00	72.74	104

Note: Since this project was a SWAp, costs could not be allocated to individual components. The IDA funding shown is just indicative by pro-rating. The 4 percent difference between actual and appraisal is due exchange rate fluctuations of SDR versus the $US.

3.15 Procurement for the Education Sector Development Project was carried out centrally through the Procurement Cell at the Ministry of Education which received extensive training. Financial management was carried out by the Technical Support Unit in the Finance Commission, which worked closely with the Procurement Cell and also did the Financial Management Reports. There were no major issues in either procurement or financial management, although the audit opinion was qualified for a period due to weakness in asset management, which was resolved by the end of the project. The construction and renovation of schools followed Bank policies and complied with environmental safeguards.

Achievement of the Objectives

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO BASIC AND SECONDARY

3.16 The objective of equitable access was substantially achieved. In primary grades 1-5, Sri Lanka has had gender parity for some years (Table 3.2). The national network of schools is complete, with only maintenance and refurbishing tasks, depending upon location. This achievement is being maintained through the demand side incentives of the project, such as providing meals and snacks. Since Sri Lanka has achieved universal primary education, the emphasis of the project is on particular groups, such as those needing special education. While no hard statistics are available, in each school the IEG mission visited there are provisions for special education and they reported increased training for teachers.

3.17 Given Sri Lanka's success in primary grades, the emphasis has shifted to access to basic education (grades 1-9) and, more specifically, grades 6-9. Thus, one of the targets selected for this objective was to increase the net enrollment rates for ages 6-14 from 81 percent baseline (2003) to 83 percent by project end (2011).

Table 3.3 Primary Enrollment and Completion Rates (2006/07, percent)

	Male	***Female***	***All***
Gross Primary Enrollment	101	102	102
Net Primary Enrollment	99	99	99
Completion Rate	99	100	99

Source: School Census (2008) and Household Expenditure Survey (2006/07)

3.18 However, the census was delayed when the Cease-Fire Agreement of 2002 broke down and fighting started again in 2006. Reliable nation-wide population data will not be available until the next census planned for 2012. Nonetheless, data from a household survey in 2006/07 showed that net enrollment for grades 6-9 was 94 percent. This can be sorted out when the next census takes place, but it would seem that almost universal access to basic education is already achieved.

3.19 Another indicator was that out of school children was reduced by 68,000 compared to target of 50,000. The survival rate through grade 9 increased from 78 percent baseline to 91 percent at project end, exceeding the target of 88 percent. The conflict affected Northern and Eastern provinces showed significant improvements due to strategic emphasis in these areas which lag behind the others. This is due in part to the additional project financing being

targeted to conflict affected schools. Demand side measures of the project at grades 6-9 level, especially provision of free uniforms, helped to keep children in school. The pro-active measures of the School Attendance Committees as part of the Program for School Improvement also helped. The Ministry of Education is also committed to expanding and improving special education for children with a variety of disabilities. The IEG mission visited classrooms for special education in the urban areas, although no numbers were given as to how much of the special education population is covered and no targets were specified. Anecdotally, the mission was informed that access for special education is increasing, and attitudes of families about their children are changing. In the past, families were ashamed and kept such children at home, but, due in part to the Ministry's efforts, more of these children are attending regular schools. However, it should be noted that education up to grade 9 or age 14 is compulsory, although no active program of punitive measures seems to be in effect.

3.20 Progress was also made in improving access to secondary education, defined as grades 10-13. The net enrollment rates for females improved from 51 percent (2002) to 69 percent (2007), and for males from 46 percent (2002) to 65 percent (2007). The network of secondary schools has expanded to the point where in 2010 a secondary school is available to every child within a five kilometer distance of their homes. The Asian Development Bank, as a SWAp partner, is especially involved in secondary education, with its Secondary Education Modernization II Project(completed in 2010) and follow on Skills Development Project (due to close in 2012). In principle, as result of Government and donor partners efforts, there is universal access since tuition is free, but other factors, especially economic ones intervene as the students approach working age. That is given as a reason for the somewhat lower male net enrollment rate. The Non-Formal Education Branch in the Ministry of Education did an island-wide survey (2007) of children not in school and makes provisions to enroll them in non-formal education programs. UNICEF in particular among donors in the SWAp is active in this area of non-formal education and is bringing to bear its experience from other countries, especially in conflict zones, into getting adolescents back into schools. During its visit to the Jaffna, the IEG mission also had conversations with a UNICEF representative who was also visiting the area at that time. Although no hard statistics were given for this activity, it appears from anecdotal evidence that progress is being made.

3.21 Data from the indicators collected show significant success in attaining those indicators, even under difficult circumstances. The IEG mission in visits to schools and discussions with teachers and provincial officials in Central Province and Northern Province could also see evidence first hand of project success. Even in the Northern Province, which is one of the weakest, due to the prolonged conflict, the schools appear to be back to functioning. Nonetheless, reports to the mission from zonal education officials indicate that there is still a great deal of reconstruction to do in some zones where the fighting and destruction were greatest during the last year of the conflict in 2008 to early 2009, At a meeting of in Jaffna, attended by directors and staff from all five districts and twelve zones of the Northern province, recovery efforts were described in zones like Killinocchi and Mullaittivu, where fighting was heaviest in late 2008 and early 2009. Not only was there physical reconstruction needed, but whole populations had been displaced and serious

psychological problems were being addressed. Local school attendance committees are making an extra effort to try to get children back in school.

IMPROVING QUALITY OF EDUCATION

3.22 The objective of improving quality of education is rated as substantial. The percentage of schools with teaching plans increased over the project period (from none to 100 percent), the percentage of schools staffed with qualified staff and supported by teacher development increased from 80 percent to 95 percent, the percentage of textbooks delivered to schools on time increased from none to 100 percent. Defects and mistakes in textbooks were corrected. An examination item bank was established and exam guidelines specified and sent to schools and stakeholders.

3.23 Using the National Assessment of Learning test scores as an indicator of learning improvement, gains were made in first language, mathematics, and English for grade 4 between 2003 and 2009. This is based upon a random sample of students, as opposed to a high stakes public exam taken by all students. Over the six-year period, using the proportion of students scoring more than 50 percent score on this test, improved learning was recorded for mathematics (65 percent to 79 percent), Mother Tongue (67 percent to 80 percent) and English (31 percent to 56 percent, Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Scores on National Assessment of Learning (Grade 4, percent of students scoring more than 50 percent on each test)

	2003	***2009***
Mother Tongue	67	80
English	31	56
Mathematics	65	79

Source: National Assessment Report 2011

3.24 Similar gains were recorded for grade 8, with mathematics going from 33 percent (2005) to 45 percent (2008) and science going from 53 percent (2005) to 59 percent (2008). Given the time sequence of Education Sector Development Project activities, which officially started in 2006, it is likely that a significant part of this progress in learning can be attributed to the additional resources from the project. However, it cannot be ruled out that other factors, for example improvements in inputs from previous projects, could have also contributed to the increase in scores. Based upon preliminary econometric analysis, the project activities most likely to be sources of improved learning are providing more textbooks, improving in-service teacher training, and instituting the school improvement program.[4]

[4] More data and analysis is needed to sort out the attribution of project inputs to learning outcomes. Preliminary econometric analysis shows a plausible connection. See "The Impact of School Quality, Socio-economic Factors, and Child Health on Students' Academic Performance: Evidence from Sri Lankan Primary Schools by Aturupane, Glewwe and Wisnieski (2009). This paper uses the household survey data collected in connection with the National Learning Assessment.

3.25 Improving the teaching and learning of English was an important part of quality in the project. The project supported this by expanding access to bilingual education. Although fairly successful, the bi-lingual program reached 87 percent of its target of 1,000 schools due to shortages of teachers. This resulted in measured improvement in cognitive achievement scores in English language from 32 to 58 at project end with all provinces exceeding targets.

3.26 Besides test scores and learning assessments, the concept of education quality also included social cohesion goals, although the objectives do not spell that out. However, under curriculum reform subcomponents, the goal of social cohesion was listed among curriculum activities. Textbooks, such as history and social studies, were revised with this goal in mind. Thus, Teacher Centers conducted multi-ethnic teacher training to promote multi-cultural ideas in the curriculum. By end of project 78 training courses were conducted. Nonetheless, it is difficult to develop a genuine outcome measure of this goal in the short run.

IMPROVING EFFICIENCY AND EQUITY OF RESOURCE ALLOCATION

3.27 This objective of improving resource allocation (in terms of efficiency and equity) is rated as substantial. Before the project there was very little information available on how resources were allocated and budgets were developed year by year on an ad hoc basis. The Public Expenditure and Quality Education Tracking Survey was developed and put into operation, the first round in 2006-07 producing a report to track both quality and resources allocated. The first round report showed that provincial schools received less than the national schools (directly under the Ministry of Education) in terms of spending per student and spending per school. The average spending per student country-wide was 16,380 rupees, whereas the national schools received 19,313 rupees per student. None of the provinces, which ranged from about 14,000 to 17,400 rupees per student, was higher than the national schools. Based upon these results, it was decided to increase resources for provincial schools. The second round of surveys is in progress, which is expected to show more equity in provincial resource allocations.

3.28 A Medium Term Budget Framework was developed to overcome the inefficiency of ad hoc budgets that reflected old priorities and did not make room for new objectives, such as enhancing higher order learning processes (critical thinking and problem solving) and skills in education. National level results show improvement in resource allocation to higher order processes (defined as those activities conducive to developing critical thinking and problem solving), and provincial level data suggested progress in this area. The percentage of recurrent budget to higher order learning process and inputs, identified as textbooks and other learning materials, increased from 0.5 percent to 3.3 percent. The percentage of the capital education budget to equipment and facilities, identified as computers, language labs and science labs, for higher order process and inputs increased from 40 percent to 43 percent. Resources allocated for maintenance and repair of education capital stock increased from 5 percent to 18 percent. All of this indicates more resource allocation to quality generating inputs as opposed to barely maintaining recurrent costs like teacher salaries.

IMPROVING GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY OF EDUCATION

3.29 This objective of improving governance and delivery of education services is rated as substantial. One major result was the introduction of school-based management—the Program for School Improvement. This involved a model of balanced control in which some functions of school management were devolved to the school level while others were retained at provincial and national levels. The basic features of the model involved active community involvement through a School Development 'Committee, school level planning aimed at improvement, a sustained program of training for teachers and the community, and very high level support within the province and national Ministry of Education. An impact evaluation of the pilot schemes show that program schools attained better student learning outcomes compared to non-program schools.

3.30 The indicators for the organizational capacity objective were completed and the long term human resource development plan was produced and put into operation. Based upon this analysis, Human Resource Development plans for provincial education officials were developed and delivered by the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration. The IEG mission visits to some provinces and discussion with officials there point to the important role of local capacity development in making progress during the project. At both the school and the provincial office level, the concerns about quality and improving management could be seen in the way the schools were working and how the provincial officers organized their work. While these are anecdotal impressions, they are fully consistent with the monitoring reports collected by the project implementation units. There appears to be a culture of good governance and management reaching down to the school level. For example, the mission conducted a rapid reading assessment in a few of the primary schools visited. The class teachers and principals did not see this as a threat, but they were genuinely interested in this as a method they should use themselves for feedback. In the provincial office meetings, it was not only the Chief Education Officer, but also the Chief Officer of the province as a whole who took a keen interest in the education reforms as a way to revitalize their local economies. This augurs well for the success of the devolution of education services down to the provinces.

Efficiency

3.31 The efficiency of the project is rated as substantial based upon the way in which the SWAp mechanism helped to improve the efficient performance of the whole sector. The Bank's contribution was not a large percentage of overall financing of the sector over the six years of the project, but the Bank's contribution served as the policy lever that transformed the way education policy and planning is done in Sri Lanka. Thus, not only was the Bank contribution used effectively, but the total Government contribution was allocated based upon a specific set of policies, and more resources were allocated to higher order learning objectives as opposed to simply increasing the budget in an ad hoc way across budget categories. In addition, a cost-benefit analysis using project cost data and earnings analysis from labor force surveys estimated an internal rate of return of about 16 percent. In addition, the project closed on time and completely disbursed its original and additional allocations.

Ratings

PROJECT OUTCOME

3.32 Given a rating of substantial for relevance, efficacy and efficiency, the overall outcome rating for the Education Sector Development Project is satisfactory. With respect to efficacy, all four project objectives are rated substantial. Relevance of objectives and of design is also rated substantial.

RISK TO DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

3.33 The overall risk to development is negligible to low. The IEG mission found that in all of its meetings and visits that the four thematic objectives supported by the SWAp are now firmly rooted and supported by the major actors and agencies. From the budgetary point of view, the Finance Commission and the Treasury are committed to the methods for allocating education budgets to the provinces and ensuring that higher order education processes get their adequate share of budget, both recurrent and capital. The executing agencies (Ministry of Education, NIE) are committed to the policy objectives of the project and have embodied these goals in the next five year strategic document (2012-2016). Enthusiasm for and understanding of the SWAp approach itself is widespread. Thus, there are no major political or policy risks going forward. There may be some risk from the economic and budgetary aspects if the growth of the economy falls below expectations, resulting in less resources being allocated to the development objectives. As of now, both the Bank and the IMF expect economic growth to continue as it is now (about six percent) or maybe more. There will be technical challenges and problems to be solved, especially in the weaker provinces of the North and East, and also the poorer provinces in the South (Uva and Sabaragama). However, the Second Education Sector Development Project will provide much of the needed support for that. Given that the budgetary risks look minimal, the technical risks of implementation are also low with Bank support, and the ownership level of the development objectives are now widespread, the overall risk to development outcome is low.

BANK PERFORMANCE

3.34 The overall performance of the Bank was satisfactory.

3.35 The **quality at entry** was satisfactory based upon strong analytical sector work during preparation. This had essential inputs and ownership by the Government agencies as well as local academics and other donors. Thus, the issues that needed to be addressed in the SWAp were well understood and identified. This helped in developing the comprehensive set of performance indicators that guided the progress of the project. Also, lessons learned from the two previous projects and a number of special studies contributed to the quality of preparatory work.

3.36 The performance of the **Bank during supervision** continued to be satisfactory. In mission visits to both central and provincial agencies, there was widespread appreciation of the Bank for fielding a sufficient implementation support team with appropriate specialists in

all areas of the project. In addition to helping with procurement and fiduciary issues, the Bank team continued its strong analytical support through special studies and continued sector work mid-way through and at the end of the project (to lay the basis for the follow-up) Education Sector Development Project-2. Numerous supervision visits throughout the provinces and zones also gave critical support to the decentralized approach to implementation and helped build up capacity, even at the school level.

BORROWER PERFORMANCE

3.37 The Borrower's performance was satisfactory.

3.38 Throughout preparation and implementation, the **Government** was actively involved and provided support. The Central Government showed its strong support and commitment to decentralization in the education sector, with the Finance Commission helping to develop the capacities of the Provincial authorities. This was especially important to help the Program for School Improvements to get up and running.

3.39 The **implementing agencies**, namely the Finance Commission, the Ministry of Education, and the Provincial Education Authorities were able to coordinate and monitor their respective responsibilities and activities. The Ministry established a procurement cell to do project procurement and the Finance Commission took care of Financial Management Reports. There were no procurement and financial management issues. The IEG mission met with the main leaders from the implementing agencies who were involved in the preparation and early implementation. Based upon these discussions, it was clear that a thorough commitment to the SWAp developed early on and the need for broad but clear policy commitments were needed to make the approach work. As the project proceeded, monthly high level monitoring meetings, chaired by the Secretary of the Ministry, helped to maintain the momentum of project activities. Periodic visits, on average every two months, to provinces and zones were conducted by the Ministry and Bank teams.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

3.40 The quality of M&E is rated substantial.

3.41 The design of M&E specified a comprehensive set of indicators that were relevant to the four main objectives. The methods and sources of collecting the data needed for the indicators were planned out during the preparation process.

3.42 As a result of good specification and planning of the M&E framework, implementation of M&E went well. One problem, which was beyond the scope of the project, was the flare up of the separatist conflict in the North after the break down of the Cease Fire Agreement in 2006. The M&E process was interrupted there, but it picked up again after May 2009 when the conflict ended.

3.43 The utilization of M&E was very extensive throughout project implementation. This was especially useful for the devolution of the governance and management of the education system, and the provincial authorities have now adopted a more evidence based approach to policy and planning. The comprehensive system of M&E also contributed to the sector work

at the end of the project, in conjunction with the extensive sector work for preparation of this project, which helped the Government and education agencies understand what was achieved, and what more is needed in the follow-on project.

4. Lessons

4.1 Since beginning the collaboration in the education sector with the various agencies of the Government, the Bank and the Government have achieved a holistic understanding of the problems of the school system, skill training and development, and the needs of higher education and the economy and the labor market. Given this holistic understanding, the two projects under review might have made more explicit links to take advantage of synergies such as aligning the curriculum changes to develop critical thinking.

4.2 Based upon the experience of the Undergraduate Education project, a few priority lessons can be drawn.

- **M&E activities for objectives related to economic and labor market relevance need to be carefully planned for early in the project cycle.** The key performance indicators needed more careful definition in relation to the objective (for example, employability) and specification of methods for obtaining and analyzing the related data (for example, tracer studies, comparison groups, on-going or special household or establishment survey programs).
- **In designing higher education sector reform programs, it is helpful to be selective and pick the top priority, feasible, issues first, avoiding trying to do too much in one project.** In Sri Lanka, the selection of quality and relevance, and the related systemic capacity building, were the entry points into a reform program that all stake holders could agree upon. This provided the initial momentum to get program of sector reform started, with the realization that it would take more than one project cycle.
- **Institutional and competitive grants provide a good incentive to overcome, for the most part, the accumulated inertia of past academic bureaucracy, at least in new programs.** The use of institutional and competitive grants provided a good incentive as opposed to trying to create changes by administrative or legislative decree. In addition, it was recognized that there was a demonstration effect in which other academic programs improved, even if they did not directly receive a grant. This adds to the lessons about the effectiveness of competitive grants found in the IEG review of higher education lending during the 1990s.
- **In a reform where there is some initial resistance, it is important to have the support of a few respected champions within the sector.** In Sri Lankan higher education, the quality assurance process succeeded in the end, after some initial suspicion and misunderstanding on the part of some professors, due to the effective leadership of a few energetic and respected professors.

4.3 The Education Sector Development Project also presents some useful lessons.

- **A sector-wide approach can increase ownership of sector goals and the work program by working through the country budgetary system and implementation arrangements.** In the case of Sri Lanka, both provincial and national level officials became more involved in sector planning, programming and resource allocation as well as review and M&E of sector performance.
- **The SWAp can serve as an important catalyst to leverage both the financial and technical support provided by the Bank and other donors.** In Sri Lanka, where this was the first SWAp, the Bank's sector-wide support initiated a broader and more regular policy-level dialogue with the Government and leveraged Bank influence on sector resource allocation beyond the resources it directly provided.
- **Learning assessments are critical to know whether the increased resources and inputs to improve education quality translate into improved learning outcomes.** The National Assessment of Learning was very important in terms of measuring learning outcomes for reading and mathematics, as a result of the increased resources and inputs to improve quality measured by the M&E system.
- **Decentralization and school-based management has the potential to improve education processes and outcomes.** In the situation of devolution to the provinces in Sri Lanka, the school-based management program enhanced ownership of the project objectives. The capacity building and support activities of the project were also major reasons for successful implementation.

4.4 Lessons from both projects have been incorporated into follow-on projects. The new higher education project, "Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century" (2010), continues and builds upon using grants as a performance incentive mechanism. Grants will also be expanded to post-graduate level research and innovation to make better connections to the private economy. The quality assurance and accreditation activities are being extended to cover private as well as public universities. The new project "Transforming School Education" continues and updates the broad policy framework of the Education Sector Development Framework Program. The M&E system is now robust enough that this project is using the Results Based Method of Disbursement, the first time this is being done in Sri Lanka. Thus, some of the successes of these two completed projects provided the foundation for more ambitious operations.

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Annex A. Basic Data Sheet

IMPROVING RELEVANCE AND QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION (P050741)

Key Project Data (amounts in US$ million)

	Appraisal estimate	*Actual or current estimate*	*Actual as % of appraisal estimate*
Total project costs	51.00	55.32	108
Loan amount	40.30	43.60*	113
Cancellation	-	1.38	-

* The ICR reported an amount of US$45.50 million. The value of the loan increased due to appreciation of the Special Drawing Right (SDR) in relation to the US$. The amount presented here is the amount reported on the Bank operations portal.

Cumulative Estimated and Actual Disbursements

	FY03	*FY04*	*FY05*	*FY06*	*FY07*	*FY08*	*FY09*	*FY10*	*FY11*
Appraisal estimate (US$M)	1.20	8.40	17.50	26.90	34.60	38.60	40.30	40.30	40.30
Actual (US$M)	0.00	1.79	13.30	17.95	24.46	29.64	35.00	40.69	43.60
Actual as % of appraisal	-	21	76	67	71	77	87	101	108

Date of final disbursement: October 2010

Project Dates

	Original	*Actual*
Initiating memorandum	4/15/2000	4/26/2001
Negotiations	8/18/2000	2/14/2003
Board approval	7/24/2001	6/10/2003
Signing	7/24/2003	7/24/2003
Effectiveness	8/25/2003	8/25/2003
Closing date	12/31/2009	6/30/2010

Staff Inputs

		USD Thousands (including travel and consultant costs)
Lending		
	FY00	79.29
	FY01	87.84
	FY02	40.21
	FY03	234.69
	TOTAL	**442.03***
Supervision/ICR		
	FY04	97.42
	FY05	103.27
	FY06	178.28
	FY07	161.23
	FY08	136.65
	TOTAL	**676.85****

* According to the ICR, there was an input on the lending budget of USD 0.14 thousand during FY06, although by that year the project was already under supervision stage. That amount is assumed to have been an error and is excluded.
** According to the ICR, there was an input on the supervision budget of USD 0.11 thousand during FY02, although that year the project was under preparation. That amount is assumed to have been an error and is excluded.

Task Team Members

Names	*Title/Specialty*	*Unit*	*Responsibility/ Specialty*
LENDING			
Appasamy, Irajen	Operations Analyst		Operations Support
Anderson, Maria	Implementation Specialist (STC)		Implementation
Aturupane, Harsha	Senior Economist		Economics
Champion, Bridie	Disbursement Officer (STC)		Disbursement
Chandrasiri, Sunil	Economist (STC)		Economics
Dahanayake, Saraswathy	Operations Analyst		Operations Support
De Pietro-Jurand	Higher Education Specialist (STC)		Higher Education
Experton, William	Peer Reviewer		Higher Education
Fernando, Deepal	Procurement Specialist		Procurement
Golladay, Frederick	Higher Education Specialist		Higher Education
Graitge, Julie-Anne	Program Assistant		Processing

Names	*Title/Specialty*	*Unit*	*Responsibility/ Specialty*
Greaney, Vincent	Lead Education Specialist		Education
Harbison, Ralph	Peer Reviewer (external)		Education
Herbert, William B.	Operations Advisor		Operations Support
Hinchliffe, Keith	Lead Education Economist		Economics
Holm-Nielsen, Lauritz	Peer Reviewer		Higher Education
Jimenez, Emmanuel	Sector Director		Education
Krishnan, Santhanam	Senior Procurement Specialist		Procurement
O'Hare, Daniel	Higher Education Specialist (STC)		Higher Education
Opatha, Madhuwanthi	Operations Anaylst (STC)		Operations Support
Perera, Corinne	Team Assistant		Processing
Raghavan, Vikram	Legal Counsel		Legal
Rasiah, Irene Julitta	Financial Management Specialist		Financial Management
Salmi, Jamil	Peer Reviewer		Higher Education
Sant'Anna, Anna	Implementation Specialist (STC)		Implementation
Shrivastava, Shashi	Senior Education Specialist		Education
Sinclair, Grant	Lead Implementation Specialist/Reviewer		Implementation
Smith, Christopher J.	Higher Education Specialist (STC)		Higher Education
Thulstrup, Erik	Higher Education Specialist (STC)		Higher Education
Van Meel, Rosita	Higher Education Specialist		TTL
Vos, Maj-Lis	Operations Officer		Operations Support
SUPERVISION/ICR:			
Yoko Nagashima	Education Specialist	SASED	TTL
Benoit Millot	Lead Education Specialist	SASED	TTL
Rosita Van Meel	Sr. Education Specialist	SASED	TTL
Harsha Aturupane	Lead Education Specialist	SASED	Higher Education
Anita Lakshmi Fernando	Team Assistant	SASHD	Processing
Deepal Fernando	Senior Procurement Specialist	SARPS	Procurement
Norman I.A. LaRocque	Consultant	HDNED	
Arun Manuja	Sr. Financial Management Specialist	SARFM	Financial Mamt.
Corinne Perera	Temporary	SACSL	Processing
Shenuka Perera	Team Assistant	SACSL	Processing
Sumith Pilapitiya	Lead Environmental Specialist	SASDI	Environment
Sunethra Chandrika Samarakoon	Procurement Specialist	SARPS	Procurement
Tikiri Kumari Seneviratne	Operations Officer	SASHD	Operations Support

Names	*Title/Specialty*	*Unit*	*Responsibility/ Specialty*
Elfreda Vincent	Program Assistant	SASHD	Processing
Jeffrey Waite	Lead Education Specialist	MNSHE	Higher Education
Lianqin Wang	Senior Education Specialist	MNSHE	M&E, Educatoin Management Information System
Alejandro Welch	Information Assistant	SASHD	Processing
Jiwanka B. Wickramasinghe	Sr. Financial Mgmt Specialist	SARFM	Financial Management.
Bernadeen Wijegunawardene	Financial Management Specialist	SARFM	Financial Management.
Miriam Witana	Procurement Specialist	SARPS	Procurement
Hongyu Yang	Operations Officer	HDNED	Evaluation

EDUCATION SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (P084580)

Key Project Data (amounts in US$ million)

	Appraisal estimate	*Actual or current estimate*	*Actual as % of appraisal estimate*
Total project costs	60.00	72.74*	104
Loan amount	60.00	72.74*	104
Cancellation	-	0.42	-

*Including the Additional Finance Amount

Cumulative Estimated and Actual Disbursements

	FY06	*FY07*	*FY08*	*FY09*	*FY10*	*FY11*
Appraisal estimate (US$M)	4.55	15.22	27.33	39.33	51.33	60.00
Actual (US$M)	6.00	18.00	24.00	36.00	60.81	72.74
Actual as % of appraisal	132	118	88	92	118	121
Date of final disbursement:	March 2011					

Project Dates

	Original	*Actual*
Concept review	3/31/2004	6/29/2004
Negotiations	1/5/2005	10/20/2005
Board approval	3/15/2005	12/15/2005
Signing	1/16/2006	1/16/2006
Effectiveness	2/21/2006	2/21/2006
Closing date	6/30/2011	6/30/2011

Staff Inputs

	Staff Weeks	*USD (including travel and consultant costs)*
LENDING		
FY04	12	22,770
FY05	44	182,091
FY06	36	137,978
TOTAL	**92**	**342,839***
SUPERVISION/ICR		
FY06	13	56,907
FY07	31	108,042
FY08	22	150,655
FY09	29	139,432
FY10	30	153,451
FY11	15	48,280
FY12	7	32,846
TOTAL	**146**	**689,613**

*According to the ICR, there was an additional input on the lending budget of USD 1,095 during FY08, although by that year the project was already under supervision. That amount is assumed to have been in error and is excluded from the table.

Task Team Members

Name	*Title*	*Unit*	*Responsibility/Specialty*
LENDING			
Harsha Aturupane	Senior Economist	SASHD	Team Leader
Helen Craig	Senior Education Specialist	SASHD	Co-Team Leader
Asoka Perera	Consultant		Construction Management

Name	*Title*	*Unit*	*Responsibility/Specialty*
Sara Gonzales Flavell	Senior Counsel	LEGMS	Legal
Miriam Witana	Operations Officer	SACSL	Operations
Wendy Fernandez	Team Assistant	SACSL	Administration
Jiwaka Wickremasinghe	Finance Specialist	SARFM	Financial Management
Eashwary Ramachandran	Operations Analyst	SASES	Operations
Sumith Pilapitiya	Senior Environmental Spec.	SASES	Environment
Annemarie Mtonyi M.	Consultant	SASHD	Counsel
Audrey Aarons	Consultant	SASHD	Education
Corinne Perera	Team Assistant	SASHD	Administration
Elfreda Vincent	Program Assistant	SASHD	Administration
Hiran Herat	Consultant	SASHD	Finance
Mohamed Allak	Consultant	SASHD	Education
Paul Glewwe	Consultant	SASHD	Research and Evaluation
Qaiser Khan	Lead Social Protection Spec.	SASHD	Social protection
Tahseen Sayed	Senior Education Specialist	SASHD	Education
Thomas Kellaghan	Consultant	SASHD	Education
Tikiri Seneviratne	Operations Officer	SASHD	Operations
Upul Sonnadara	Consultant	SASHD	Education Statistician
Hong Tan	Lead Economist	WBI	Economics
SUPERVISION/ICR			
Harsha Aturupane	Lead Education Specialist	SASHD	Team Leader
Helen J. Craig	Lead Human Development Spec.	AFTED	Co-Team Leader
Eliezer Orbach	Consultant	ECSPE	Organization
Hiran Herat	Consultant	OPCFC	Implementation
Shenuka Perera	Team Assistant	SACSL	Administration
Bernadeen Enoka Wijegunawardene	Financial Management Specialist	SARFM	Financial Management
Enoka Wijegunewardena	Financial Management Specialist	SARFM	Financial Management
Jiwanka B. Wickramasinghe	Sr Financial Management Specialist	SARFM	Financial Management
Dhimant Jayendraray Baxi	Sr Procurement Spec.	SARPS	Procurement
Sunethra Chandrika Samarakoon	Procurement Specialist	SARPS	Procurement
Eashwary Ramachandran	Operations Analyst	SASDI	Environment
Nadeera Rajapakse	Consultant	SASDI	Environment

Name	*Title*	*Unit*	*Responsibility/Specialty*
Sumith Pilapitiya	Lead Environmental Spec.	SASDI	Environment
Samantha Prasada Wijesundera	Water & Sanitation Spec.	SASDU	Procurement

Annex B. List of Persons Interviewed

Name	*Title*	*Organization*
Rukmal Bandaranayake	HR Manager	Aviva NDB Insurance
K.W.D.U. Chandrakumera	Deputy Director of Education	Central Province
H.W. Gunadasa	Chief Secretary	Central Province
T.G. Jayasekara	Deputy Director of Education Planning	Central Province
Ananda Assingen	HR Manager	Chemical Industries Colombo
Professor S. Srisatkunaraja	Professor	Department of Mathematics and Statistics, University of Jaffna
K.H.Janaka Mangala	Lecturer	Dept. Mech. Engineering, Univ. of Moratuwa
Upali S. Philip Senaratne	National Education Planning Consultant	Development Programme, Finance Commission
Sarath Silva	HR Manager	Global Services Mobitel Broadcast Technical Center
Professor M.J.S. Wijeyaratne	Deputy Director	Higher Education for the Twenty First Century Project, Ministry of Higher Education
Professor Lakshman L. Ratnayake	Project Director	Higher Education for the Twenty First Century, Ministry of Higher Education
Sister Thaya	Principal	Holy Family National School, Jaffna
Viraj Jayawardene		IFS Sri Lanka (branch of global software firm)
C.A. de Silva	Director	Maga Engineering (Pvt) Ltd.
Chandi D. Abeyagwawardene	Human Resources Officer	MAS Holdings (prominent garment manufacturer)
Maneesha Abeyratne	Human Resources Officer	MAS Holdings
N.Varatharasa	Director of Planning	Ministry of Education, Northern Province
E.L.K. Dissannayake,	Assistant Director Labor Market Information	Ministry of Productivity Promotion
Lalith Kannangara	Secretary	Ministry of Productivity Promotion
W. M. Abeyrathna Bandara	Director General	National Institute of Education
Dr. Jayanthi Gunasekara,		National Institute of Education
M. Rathakrishnan	Additional Provincial Director of Education	Northern Province
P. Vigmeswaran	Provincial Director of Education	Northern Province

Name	*Title*	*Organization*
H.M.P. Punchi Banda	Chief Accountant	Provincial Office, Central Province
K. Bradley	Director of Planning	Provincial Office, Northern Province
R.M. Amarasekara	HR Manager	Road Development Authority
Godwin Kodituwakku	Director	Research and Development, National Institute of Education
Prithiviraj Perera	Secretary General	Sri Lanka National Commission for UNESCO
Sister M. Gnanadarshini	Principal	St. Benedict's School, Jaffna
Thilak T. Thilagaraj	Managing Director	Tilko Jaffna City Hotels (Pvt) Ltd.
Heshana Kuruppu	General Manager	Trischel Fabric (Pvt) Ltd.
Professor Ananda Jayawardane	Vice-Chancellor	University of Moratuwa
Harsha Aturupane	Lead Education Specialist	World Bank
Yoko Nagashima	Senior Education Specialist	World Bank
Dr. A.D.U. Shantha Amarasinghe	Department Chemical Engineering, Head	University of Moratuwa
Professor Sarath Amunugama	Vice-Chancelor	University of Kelaniya